

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-2 and 4-11 have been cancelled and replaced with claims 12-15 to more clearly define Applicant's invention. Reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2 and 4-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tahami et al., (U.S. Patent No. 5,402,171) in view of Tanaka et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,208,376) and further in view of Katayama et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,141,036). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection as applied to new claims 12-15.

Claim 12 is directed to an electronic camera comprising inter alia an image discrimination circuit configured to judge whether the image data represents a panoramic image or not based on an aspect ratio of the image data selected from the recording medium. When the selected image data is judged as representing a panoramic image by the image discrimination circuit, a display-mode setting circuit sets a panoramic display-mode, and scrolls and displays on a display panel the selected panoramic image by controlling the display circuit in accordance with an operation of a frame-advance button.

There is no teaching or suggestion in Tagami et al. that an aspect ratio of image data is used to determine whether the image data represents a panoramic image. Nor is there any teaching or suggestion of display mode setting circuit means responsive to the display discrimination means for setting a panoramic display mode displaying on a display panel the selected panoramic image by controlling the display circuit in accordance with an operation of a frame-advance button based upon the determination made by the discrimination means. Instead, in Tagami, the panorama mode is determined by an operator operating a playback button 52 and a direction button or direction button 53 (see col. 25, lines 17-22).

This deficiency of Tagami is specifically recognized by the Examiner in the first full paragraph on page 4. The Examiner, however, contends that this limitation is shown in the teaching of Katayama et al. and refers to the Abstract, Fig. 3B, Fig. 8 and Fig. 11 of Katayama. However, in Katayama the panorama mode is not based on the aspect ratio of the image data. Instead, in Katayama, referring to col. 4, lines 41-62, signal reading means 104 reads the signal recorded on a recording medium 103 and outputs both a video signal to the display signal

generation means 102 and an image mode signal to image mode detecting means 105. It is this image mode signal that specifies what mode the image is in, i.e., stereoscopic image mode, modified aspect ratio image mode, panoramic image mode, high definition image mode, etc. The image mode detecting means 105 then detects the image mode from the received image mode signal.

The display mode input means 106 then displays on a display panel 10 a selection menu corresponding to the image mode detection signal received from the image mode detecting means 105, as shown in Figs. 3a, 3b and 3c. In particular, Fig. 3b, which the Examiner refers to is a display showing that a panoramic image mode has been detected.

It is clear that Katayama determines a panoramic mode from a signal recorded on the recording medium, and not by the aspect ratio of the image data.

Tanaka et al. is cited as showing an at-a-glance mode. However, there is no teaching in Tanaka of the image discrimination circuit or display mode setting circuit set forth in claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that neither Tagami et al., Tanaka et al. or Katayama et al. nor the combination thereof not teach or suggest an electronic camera comprising inter alia an image discrimination circuit configured to judge whether the image data represents a panoramic image or not, based on an aspect ratio of the image data selected from the recording medium. Nor do they teach or suggest that when the selected image data is judged as representing a panoramic image by the image discrimination circuit, a display-mode setting circuit sets a panoramic display-mode, and scrolls and displays on a display panel the selected panoramic image by controlling the display circuit in accordance with an operation of a frame-advance button.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 12 is clearly patentable over the combination of Tagami et al., Tanaka et al. and Katayama et al.

Claim 13 is dependent from claim 12 and is therefore patentable for the same reasons, as well as because of the combination of features set forth in claim 13 with the features set forth in claim 12.

Claim 14, like claim 12, is directed to an electronic camera comprising inter alia an image discrimination circuit configured to judge whether the image data represents a panoramic image

or not, based on an aspect ratio of the image data selected from the recording medium, wherein when the selected image data is judged as representing a panoramic image by the image discrimination circuit, a display-mode setting circuit sets a panoramic display-mode.

Accordingly, claim 14 is patentable over the references for the same reasons as claim 12.

In addition, claim 14 claims that the display-mode setting circuit divides the selected panoramic image into a plurality of areas, and displays step by step on the display panel the divided panoramic image by controlling the display circuit, in accordance with an operation of a frame-advance button. None of the references disclose this feature. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 14 is patentable over the references for this reason as well.

Claim 15 is dependent from claim 14 and is therefore patentable for the same reasons, as well as because of the combination of features with the features set forth in claim 14 set forth in Claim 15.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on September 21, 2004

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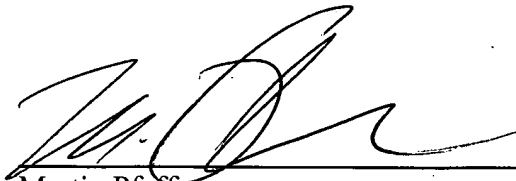

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